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Dissent Dept.: Bennett Backs Goofless CIA

By DAVID KRASLOW
Of Our Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON—Just when most people were convinced that the Central Intelligence Agency had pulled a rock on Cuba, up stepped Rep. Charles Bennett of Jacksonville with a vigorous dissent.

Bennett is more informed on CIA activities than most members of Congress. He is one of about 20 congressmen who serve on four secret committees with responsibility for screening the CIA.

Bennett, a volunteer informant, he spoke to a reporter when a reporter asked him questions.

"I don't see any fault intelligence that went to the White House from the CIA," the man said. "I don't think you can lay this (Cuba) to the CIA."

"If mistakes were made, they were made at the White House. Perhaps the trouble was that the White House didn't do what the CIA recommended."

He talked like a man who knew something, but he made no further attempts to get some elaboration.

What he did say contained a clear hint that the CIA had briefed the committee fairly recently on what it knew about Cuba.

And while the CIA is a matter of public concern, a debate between Bennett and Rep. Robert Sikes of Crestview, dean of the Florida congressional delegation, would prove interesting.

Sikes, a key member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, has long felt that Congress should do a better job of supervising and auditing the CIA. Bennett feels just as strongly that present controls are "adequate."



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